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 Department of State TELEGRAM

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

SECRET REVIEWED BY *Fusley* DATE *10/6/80*

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 ACTION SS-45

INFO OCT-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 or/0046 EXEMPTIONS 009850

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 FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 396

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y F O R T E X T

DEPARTMENT PASS AS DESIRED.

MORNING APRIL 4 EMBASSY TOLD BY TIME CORRESPONDENT
 OF TRIP TAKEN IN COMPANY NEW YORK TIMES CORRESPONDENT TO SVAY
 RIENG PROVINCE APRIL 3

1. IN SVAY TEAP DISTRICT THERE, CORRESPONDENTS INFORMED BY
 DISTRICT CHIEF IN CHIPHOU TOWN ON ROUTE ONE THAT "AMERICAN"
 FORCES HAVE BEEN REGULARLY SHELLING (105 AND 155) ATTACKING
 WITH HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS, AND WITH JETS WITHIN CAMBODIA.
 ACCORDING TO DISTRICT CHIEF, WHO SHOWED CORRESPONDENTS HIS
 TACTICAL MAP, ATTACKS TAKING PLACE NORTH AND SOUTH OF ROUTE
 ONE SINCE APRIL 1.

2. DISTRICT CHIEF TOLD CORRESPONDENTS HE HAPPY WITH ATTACKS
 WHICH TO DATE HAVE NOT KILLED ANY CAMBODIANS. CHIEF SAID LOCAL
 INFORMANTS TOLD HIM THAT AMMO DUMP AND FOOD CACHE
 DESTROYED.

3. CHIEF SAID VC PUSHED FROM BORDER BY AMERICANS WHO NOW
 HAVE MOVED TO BORDER, (TIME PHOTOGRAPHER WITH GROUP WAS WITH
 AIR CAVALRY IN SOUTH VIET NAM ON MARCH 31 AT WHICH TIME HE
 REPORTS AIR CAVALRY WERE KEPT THREE KILOMETERS FROM BORDER.
 CORRESPONDENTS ASSUME THIS NO LONGER TRUE).

4. DISTRICT CHIEF REPORTED CHIPHOU TOWN ATTACKED BY VC EVENING
 APRIL 2. ATTACKERS USED ONLY AK-47S AND WERE DRIVEN OFF BUT

EXDIS REVIEW

Cat. A - Caption removed;
 transferred to O/PEDTC

Cat. B - Transferred to O/PEDTC
 with all markings
 controlled by S/S

Cat. C - Caption removed;
 retained by S/S

Reviewed by: *Elizabeth Kelly*
 Date: *Sept 21, 1979*

Phnom Penh 423
 4-4-70

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5. WHILE CORRESPONDENTS TRAVELING, PEASANTS HAILED AND HALTED THEM, POINTING DOWN ROAD. CORRESPONDENTS SAW AND PHOTOGRAPHED GROUP OF THREE VC CROSSING ROUTE ONE NEAR CHIPOU. VC WERE UNIFORMED, CARRYING WEAPONS, BUT NO BACK PACKS, WHICH CORRESPONDENTS CLAIM MEANS BASE CAMP IN AREA. PEASANTS OBVIOUSLY AFRAID OF VC.

7. LT. COL. BU TITH WHO, ACCORDING TO CORRESPONDENTS, IS MILITARY COMMANDER FOR PROVINCE ESTIMATES 20,000 VC IN ENTIRE PROVINCE. COMMANDERS SAID ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO EVALUATE AT THIS MOMENT AS VC ARE MOVING ABOUT. HE HAD NO EXPLANATION FOR MOVEMENT NOR DIRECTION.

COMMENT: IN VIEW ABOVE, I WOULD APPRECIATE INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE. DESPITE REQUESTS, I HAVE RECEIVED VIRTUALLY NO INFO FROM SAIGON ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING ALONG FRONTIER (PERHAPS THERE IS NO FRONTIER) PERHAPS THERE IS NO INFO). ARE US/ARVN FORCES SHELLING OR OTHERWISE IN ACTION ON CAMBODIAN TERRITORY? HAVE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT BEEN CHANGED? NEEDLESS TO SAY, PRESS DRAWING OWN CONCLUSIONS AND WILL QUERY DEPARTMENT. ALSO, REVELATION OF ALLEGED US ACTIONS BOUND PLACE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT IN EMBARRASSING POSITION WHERE IT MAY WELL HAVE TO PROTEST. NEWS WILL ALSO BE MOST WELCOME TO SIHADUNK, CHICOMS AND OTHER FRIENDS.

RIVES

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